UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/46/535
9 October 1991

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-sixth session
Agenda item 72

UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST

Offers by Member States of grants and scholarships for higher education, including vocational training, for Palestine refugees

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The present report is submitted to the General Assembly in pursuance of its resolution 45/73 D of 11 December 1990.

2. The report includes the substance of responses from Member States and United Nations agencies to the appeal contained in that resolution, together with reference to further action taken by Member States and United Nations agencies in response to the appeal contained in General Assembly resolutions 32/90 F of 13 December 1977, 33/112 C of 18 December 1978, 34/52 C of 23 November 1979, 35/13 B of 3 November 1980, 36/146 H of 16 December 1981, 37/120 D of 16 December 1982, 38/83 D of 15 December 1983, 39/99 D of 14 December 1984, 40/165 D of 16 December 1985, 41/69 D of 3 December 1986, 42/69 D of 2 December 1987, 43/57 D of 6 December 1988 and 44/47 D of 8 December 1989. By these resolutions the Assembly appealed to all States, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations to augment special allocations for scholarships and grants to Palestine refugees, and invited the relevant United Nations agencies to continue, within their respective spheres of competence, to extend assistance for higher education to Palestine refugee students. The Assembly requested the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to act as recipient and trustee for such special allocations and scholarships and to award them to qualified refugee candidates.

3. In 1990, the Government of Japan provided 20 fellowships, through UNRWA, to Palestine refugees who are employed by UNRWA as vocational training staff. The fellowships, which apply to studies in Japan, are under the guidance of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Since the inception of this programme in 1985, a total of 76 fellowships have been provided by the Government of Japan. In 1989, the Government of Japan contributed $1 million, to be spent over a five year period, towards UNRWA's university scholarship programme for secondary school graduates. The recipients are Palestine refugee students from the occupied territory. A total of 141 awards have been made for the years 1989/90 and 1990/91. These awards, while not specifically in response to the General Assembly resolutions, are in keeping with their spirit.

4. The Government of Switzerland contributed $180,000 in 1989 to UNRWA's university scholarships programme for secondary school graduates, and an additional $213,000 to the programme in 1990. A total of 79 scholarships have been awarded to Palestine refugee students as a result of these contributions.

5. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as part of its long-standing agreement with UNRWA, granted 60 fellowships to Palestine refugee education staff of UNRWA in the period 1981 to 1989. In 1990 two additional fellowships were granted. In September 1990 the Director-General of UNESCO launched an appeal to member States and foundations to contribute to a special fund in order to provide fellowships to students from the occupied territory. He also launched an appeal to 89 universities linked to the United Nations network, to grant research and further training fellowships to Palestinian researchers and lecturers in science and technology. UNESCO has reported responses, to date, of fellowship offers from Novosibirsk State University (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) and the University of Khartoum (Sudan). UNESCO has also allocated $183,960 to Palestine under the UNESCO Participation Programme for 1990-91.

6. The World Health Organization (WHO) continued to offer a postgraduate training fellowship programme aimed at developing the technical and managerial skills of the staff of UNRWA's Department of Health, and at meeting future replacement needs under the various health disciplines. Six Palestine refugee health staff of UNRWA benefited from these WHO international fellowships in 1990. WHO has awarded more than 30 such fellowships since 1986.

7. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) followed up its award of 14 fellowships in the period 1980 to 1989 with the offer of a further award in 1990.

8. During 1989, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) continued within its sphere of competence to extend assistance for higher education to Palestine refugee students through its project "Specialized Training in Agricultural Development" under which three Palestinian fellows have continued their studies since 1986 for postgraduate degrees in Agricultural Economics and Animal Production. Two successfully completed their studies in 1989. FAO, through its programme "Assistance to

Al-Quds Open University", also provides assistance in the techniques and practices of distance education and in the elaboration of curricula and programmes related to land and community development.

9. The Universal Postal Union (UPU) has awarded a 12-month fellowship at the Arab Higher Postal Institute in Damascus to a Palestinian student. This follows the granting of similar fellowships to Palestinians since 1979.